

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
AUSTIN DIVISION**

BRUCE M. MCMEANS,
Plaintiff,

V.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
Defendant.

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A-14-CV-079-LY

**ORDER ON *IN FORMA PAUPERIS* STATUS AND
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION ON THE MERITS OF THE CLAIMS**

TO: THE HONORABLE LEE YEAKEL
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

Before the Court is Bruce M. McMeans's ("McMeans") Application to Proceed *In Forma Pauperis* (Dkt. No. 1). The District Court referred the above-motion to the undersigned Magistrate Judge for a determination pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b) and Rule 1(c) of Appendix C of the Local Rules of the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas, Local Rules for the Assignment of Duties to United States Magistrate Judges.

I. APPLICATION TO PROCEED *IN FORMA PAUPERIS*

After reviewing the financial information in McMeans's *in forma pauperis* motion, the Court finds that he is indigent. Accordingly, the Court **HEREBY GRANTS** McMeans *in forma pauperis* status and **ORDERS** his Complaint be filed without pre-payment of fees or costs or giving security therefor pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(1). This indigent status is granted subject to a later determination the action should be dismissed if the allegation of poverty is untrue or the action is found frivolous or malicious pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e). McMeans is further advised that although he has been granted leave to proceed *in forma pauperis*, a Court may, in its discretion,

impose costs of court at the conclusion of this lawsuit, as in other cases. *Moore v. McDonald*, 30 F.3d 616, 621 (5th Cir. 1994).

As stated below, this Court has conducted a § 1915(e) review of the claims made in McMeans's Complaint and is recommending his claims be dismissed under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e). Therefore, **service upon Defendants should be withheld** pending the District Court's review of the recommendations made in this report. If the District Court declines to adopt the recommendations, then service should be issued at that time upon Defendants.

II. SECTION 1915(e)(2) FRIVOLOUSNESS REVIEW

Because McMeans has been granted leave to proceed *in forma pauperis*, the Court is required by standing order to review his Complaint under §1915(e)(2), which provides in relevant part that “the court shall dismiss the case at any time if the court determines that . . . the action or appeal (i) is frivolous or malicious; (ii) fails to state a claim on which relief may be granted; or (iii) seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from such relief.” 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2). “A complaint filed IFP may be dismissed as frivolous if it lacks an arguable basis in law or fact,” *Allison v. Kyle*, 66 F.3d 71, 73 (5th Cir. 1995), and the claims “are of little or no weight, value, or importance, not worthy of serious consideration or trivial.” *Deutsch v. United States*, 67 F.3d 1080, 1083 (3d Cir. 1995).

Pro se complaints are liberally construed in favor of the plaintiff. *Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520–21 (1972). The court must “accept as true factual allegations in the complaint and all reasonable inferences that can be drawn therefrom.” *Nami v. Fauver*, 82 F.3d 63, 65 (3d Cir. 1996); *see also Watts v. Graves*, 720 F.2d 1416, 1419 (5th Cir. 1983). In deciding whether a complaint states a claim, “[t]he court’s task is to determine whether the plaintiff has stated a legally cognizable

claim that is plausible, not to evaluate the plaintiff's likelihood of success." *Lone Star Fund V (U.S.), L.P. v. Barclays Bank PLC*, 594 F.3d 383, 387 (5th Cir. 2010). "A claim has facial plausibility when the [nonmovant] pleads factual content that allows the court to draw the reasonable inference that the [movant] is liable for the misconduct alleged." *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009). "The plausibility standard is not akin to a 'probability requirement,' but it asks for more than a sheer possibility that a defendant has acted unlawfully." *Id.* However, the petitioner's pro se status does not offer him "an impenetrable shield, for one acting pro se has no license to harass others, clog the judicial machinery with meritless litigation, and abuse already overloaded court dockets." *Ferguson v. Mbank Houston N.A.*, 808 F.2d 358, 359 (5th Cir. 1986).

A. Factual Allegations and Claims

From the very limited information provided, this case appears to arise in relation to work that McMeans did or was supposed to do in Afghanistan. Dkt. No. 1, Exh. 2. McMeans alleges that he was denied a "C.A.C." card, which apparently was required for him to work in a war zone and military base. *Id.* From the Court's own research, McMeans seems to be referring to a "common access card." McMeans appears to blame the President of the United States for denying him a C.A.C. card through various Presidential Orders issued in 2008, 2009, and 2010. *Id.*; *see also* Dkt. No. 1, Exh. 3. It is unclear what relief McMeans is seeking in his suit.

B. Merits of McMeans's Claim

Even broadly construing McMeans's Complaint, this Court still finds it difficult to discern precisely what claim McMeans is attempting to bring against the President. However, in this case, the Court need not determine exactly what claim McMeans is stating. The President of the United States is entitled to absolute immunity for any action taken in an official capacity. *See Nixon v.*

Fitzgerald, 457 U.S. 731, 749 (1982). At most, McMeans seems to be complaining about several orders issued by the President of the United States in 2008, 2009, and 2010. Dkt. No. 1, Exh. 3. There is no allegation that these Presidential Orders were not issued in the President's official capacity. As such, the President of the United States is entitled to absolute immunity for his actions and McMeans's instant suit must be dismissed for failure to state a claim on which relief may be granted.

III. ORDERS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the foregoing discussion, the Court **HEREBY GRANTS** McMeans *in forma pauperis* status (Dkt. No. 1). Service upon Defendants should be withheld pending the District Court's review of the recommendations made in this report. If the District Court declines to adopt the recommendations, then service should be issued at that time upon Defendants.

The undersigned **FURTHER RECOMMENDS** that the District Court **DISMISS** McMeans's federal cause of action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

IV. WARNINGS

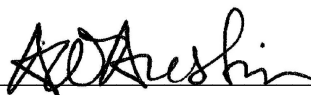
The parties may file objections to this Report and Recommendation. A party filing objections must specifically identify those findings or recommendations to which objections are being made. The District Court need not consider frivolous, conclusive, or general objections. *See Battle v. United States Parole Comm'n*, 834 F.2d 419, 421 (5th Cir. 1987).

A party's failure to file written objections to the proposed findings and recommendations contained in this Report within fourteen (14) days after the party is served with a copy of the Report shall bar that party from *de novo* review by the District Court of the proposed findings and recommendations in the Report and, except upon grounds of plain error, shall bar the party from

appellate review of unobjected-to proposed factual findings and legal conclusions accepted by the District Court. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C); *Thomas v. Arn*, 474 U.S. 140, 150–53, 106 S. Ct. 466, 472-74 (1985); *Douglass v. United Servs. Auto. Ass’n*, 79 F.3d 1415, 1428-29 (5th Cir. 1996) (en banc).

To the extent that a party has not been served by the Clerk with this Report & Recommendation electronically pursuant to the CM/ECF procedures of this District, the Clerk is directed to mail such party a copy of this Report and Recommendation by certified mail, return receipt requested.

SIGNED this 10th day of February, 2014.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Austin", is written over a horizontal line.

ANDREW W. AUSTIN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE